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C O P Y

September 29, 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

FROM: George P. Shultz

SUBJECT: My Meeting with Gromyko September 28

I met with Gromyko for three hours yesterday. Judged against what we know of the kind of polemical and aggressive stance Gromyko can take, I was struck by how sober his presentation was. Clearly he wants to keep talking to us, despite the claims some Soviets make that they have written off the Reagan Administration.

Gromyko led off. Noting that our relations are "politically tense," he asked whether the US wants "peaceful coexistence" or confrontation. I replied that the choice was for Moscow to make; the deterioration in our relations is a result of Soviet conduct -- their persistent refusal to honor agreements on human rights, their relentless military buildup, and irresponsible activities in Poland, Afghanistan and elsewhere. I went through our human rights concerns in particular detail -- family reunification, the persecution of the Helsinki Watch Group, Jewish emigration -- putting them in the context of their relationship to our own fundamental values.

I made it clear that we are serious in our approach to INF, START and other negotiations. He agreed that the talks in Geneva are proceeding in a businesslike fashion. Nonetheless, he strongly criticized the specifics of our proposals, particularly the zero option in INF, saying that it could not form the basis for an agreement. I stressed the importance of verification, indicating that our concern applied not only to START and INF, but to agreements previously concluded (the chemical weapons ban) as well as to agreements not yet ratified (Threshold Test Ban and Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaties).

In addition to arms control, I dwelt at some length on some of our regional concerns: Poland, Afghanistan, Kampuchea, Central America. As you and I agreed, on

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Nicaragua I told Gromyko that we are concerned by the pattern of arms shipments, and said that the introduction of jet fighters into Nicaragua would be "unacceptable."

Toward the close of the meeting, I stressed that Soviet moves in areas such as emigration, human rights, Poland, Afghanistan and Kampuchea would be welcome. If the pattern of Soviet conduct changes there may be a basis for mutually beneficial agreements. We are prepared to go either way, I said. I intend to take the same approach in next Monday's meeting, where regional issues not covered yesterday will surely be a major focus.

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